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## Utah State University Women's Soccer Pre-Game Practice Cheer

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Wesley Hamblin

Logan, Utah

December 1, 2017

## **Utah State University Women's Soccer Pre-Game Practice Cheer**

### **Custom**

### **Informant**

Wesley Hamblin has been a member of the Utah State Women's soccer team for the past four years. She just completed her senior season as an Aggie, and has been playing soccer since she was four-years-old. Starting and playing all four years of her college career, she is well-known as a leader on the team and is a vocal and energetic player. I have played with her on the team for the past two years. Wesley is from Alpine, Utah and has been a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints her entire life. She is studying Communications and Marketing and will graduate in the Spring of 2018.

### **Context**

The Utah State Women's Soccer team competes as a D1 team in the Mountain West league. This means that they compete at the highest division of college athletics and play other universities in the mountain west area. This custom happens after each pre-game practice. A pre-game practice is the practice the day before a game. It is short, and has a set order to what drills we do. They usually are on Thursdays and Saturdays because the team plays Friday and Sunday. The cheer is performed immediately following practice before everyone leaves. Every player who is there participates in the cheer, but coaches do not. Sometimes this means the whole team including injured players and redshirt players (athletes who are on the team but will not play in games that year). Other times, if the team is traveling and not at home, only the twenty-two players who have been selected to travel and are present will perform the cheer. It is done on our home field in front of the bleachers because that is where the coaches bring everyone in the end practice. If we are traveling, it is done on whatever practice field we are on. Anyone can lead the cheer or come up with cheer idea. The option is offered to the whole team, but generally upperclassmen will lead the cheer.

I collected this folklore from Wesley about a month after season had ended. We are roommates, so I interviewed her in her room. I sat on her bed while she was sitting at her desk. She had been doing homework before I came in. We live together with a few other teammates in an off-campus house. Wesley has lived in this house for three years. The overall feeling was calm and relaxed since Wesley and I know each other well. The house was quiet even though it was the middle of the day. Her room was very clean like it always is.

## Text

Wesley: And, uh we just a—it's where you pick out like—do you want me to describe it?

[mhhh yeah] Ok, it's like pick out, well the team—what is it called, not name [um their mascot?] mascot, yeah mascot and then you just match it with a word. And, I don't know usually like the team comes up with it together and it's kinda fun, like, some people are annoyed and like wanna leave practice but others are like having fun like coming up with like, stupid words that can—same lettering words...

Mealii: So give me, like, an example.

W: Ok. Like, uh, what's a team

M: Like, what is New Mexico, lobos?

W: Lobos. Like. lacerate the lobos is usually what I feel like we end up doing. What's another one, San Diego

M: And then we have like silly ones so give me an example of a silly one

W: I'm trying to think, like I have to think of the names of the teams. What's San Diego? [uh Aztecs?] Aztecs. Ass-kick the Aztecs [laughter] or like, um, you probably don't want to say that one.

M: No that's fine.

W: You'll say that one? [mhhmm] yeah that one's funny [laughing, it is funny] you should say that one.

Note for clarification: After the team comes up with the cheer, ex. Lacerate the Lobos, someone will call out "Lacerate the Lobos on three! One, two three!" The team will then say the cheer all

together. The team will stand in close as a group with everyone's arms help up in the middle with their hand in a fist.

### **Texture**

The texture of this custom is fun and energetic. As Wesley mentions, there are some people who are in a rush and just want to get the cheer over with, but most people enjoy it. The team will loudly yell the cheer, and sometimes laugh as they do so if the cheer is silly. Occasionally, the team will say the cheer in different ways. For example, saying the cheer with a voice that is much deeper than normal, or gravely like a growl. Usually there is an aggressive tone towards the cheer the team picks and the way it is said. Wesley mentioned, "It's kind of like, just a joke, but it's just like getting the team in your head the day before a game. It's like a little way of preparing yourself, but no one takes it super seriously I feel like." There is also an element of unity to the cheer because the person calling the cheer will not start until everyone is together.

While I was interviewing Wesley, she replied to my questions a little rushed and scattered because I think she wanted to get back to her homework. She did not yell the cheer as we normally would, but instead just talked at a normal level. We both were laughing a little through the interview because it was a little weird to talk about this cheer out of context. It normally is only an 'on the field' custom.

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Dr. Lynne S. McNeill

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